



<https://unsplash.com/photos/-H5KljcVxwI>

Owning a dog is a rewarding experience, full of fun and excitement. The love and loyalty they show to us can be life-changing. However, it also carries a responsibility to care for the dog until they grow older. Whether you're a novice owner or an experienced dog lover who's [looking into how to become a registered dog breeder](#), this commitment cannot be understated, as our dogs rely on us for just about everything they need to live.

As dogs age, they experience many of the same physical changes that humans do. They may lose muscle mass and bone density, and their skin may become thinner and less elastic. Their senses may also decline, and they may become more susceptible to disease.

Many of these changes are due to the natural ageing process. However, some can be exacerbated by poor nutrition, lack of exercise, and exposure to toxins.

As our furry companions age, their needs change. That's why it's important to adjust your dog's care routine as they get older. With a few tweaks, you can help your senior dog live a long, happy, and healthy life.

Let's walk through some of the best ways to care for your dog in their old age.

How to Care for Your Senior Dog

1. Feed them a nutrient-rich diet

As your dog gets older, their metabolism slows down and they become less active. This means they don't need as many calories as they did when they were younger. To make sure your senior dog is [getting all the nutrients they need](#), feed them a high-quality, senior-specific dog food. These formulas are designed to meet the needs of older dogs and can help them maintain a healthy weight.

2. Keep them active

While your senior dog may not be as active as they once were, it's still important to keep them moving. Regular exercise can help them maintain a healthy weight, strengthen their muscles and bones, and improve their overall health. Take your dog for walks, play fetch, or go for a swim. Just make sure to take it easy at first and gradually increase the intensity and duration of their workouts.

3. Watch their weight

As your dog ages, they may start to put on a few extra pounds. This can put them at risk for obesity-related health problems like joint pain, diabetes, and respiratory issues. To help your senior dog maintain a healthy weight, feed them senior-specific dog food and make sure they get plenty of exercise.

4. Keep their teeth clean

Good oral hygiene is just as important for dogs as it is for humans. As your dog gets older, their teeth may become stained or develop tartar buildup. This can lead to gum disease and other dental problems. To help keep your dog's teeth clean and healthy, brush them daily with a dog-specific toothpaste and take them to the vet for regular teeth cleanings.

5. Check their ears

Ear infections are common in dogs of all ages, but they're especially common in senior dogs. This is because their ear canals become narrower as they age, making them more susceptible to infection. To help prevent ear infections, check your dog's ears regularly and clean them with a dog-safe ear cleaner. If you notice any redness, swelling, or discharge, take them to the vet.

6. Keep their nails trimmed

If your dog's nails get too long, they can cause pain and discomfort. They may also break and split, which can lead to infection. To keep your dog's nails healthy and trimmed, clip them every few weeks with a dog-specific nail clipper. If you're not comfortable doing this yourself, take them to a professional groomer or vet.

7. Check their skin

As your dog gets older, their skin may become thinner and more sensitive. This can make them more susceptible to skin problems like allergies, hot spots, and infections. To help keep your dog's skin healthy, brush them regularly with a soft-bristled brush and use a mild,

hypoallergenic shampoo when bathing them. If you notice any redness, swelling, or discharge, take them to the vet.

8. Keep their coat healthy

A healthy coat is an important part of your dog's overall health. As your dog gets older, their coat may become thinner and less lustrous. To help keep your dog's coat healthy, brush them regularly with a dog-specific brush and use a moisturising shampoo when bathing them. You may also want to consider giving them a dietary supplement like omega-3 fatty acids, which can help improve the health of their skin and coat.

9. Keep an eye on their bathroom habits

Changes in your dog's bathroom habits can be a sign of a health problem. As your dog gets older, they may start to urinate more frequently or have accidents inside. They may also have a change in their stool, including diarrhoea or constipation. If you notice any changes in your dog's bathroom habits, take them to the vet.

10. Visit the vet regularly

As your dog gets older, it's important to take them to the vet for regular checkups. These checkups can help catch health problems early and keep your dog healthy. During a checkup, the vet will check your dog's weight, teeth, ears, and skin. They may also run tests, like blood work, to check for underlying health problems. Pet insurance can be helpful in case of any emergencies, so consider signing up for coverage for your dog.

11. Monitor how they behave

Be aware of changes in your dog's behaviour. Senior dogs may start to experience changes in their behaviour, such as increased anxiety or aggression. If you notice any changes, talk to your veterinarian or a canine behaviourist. Cognitive decline is a serious concern in senior dogs, and recent studies have shown that it can cause aggressive behaviour that may be dangerous to other animals or people.

Final Thoughts

Don't forget the most important tip: Give your dog plenty of love and attention. They're still the same puppy that you've raised since they were young, only they're a little less sprightly now. They love and adore you just as much as they always have, they just need a little more care. As your dog ages, they may start to feel lonely or isolated. Make sure to spend time with your dog and give them plenty of affection and attention.